

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 764

By Lundberg

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of Judge Paul R. Wohlford of Bristol.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of Judge Paul R. Wohlford; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wohlford was an exemplary public servant and consummate jurist who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born in Kingsport on Sunday, June 23, 1940, Paul R. Wohlford was the son of Paul and Theresa McLennan Wohlford, who taught him the value of hard work and service to others; and

WHEREAS, after graduating from Duke University in 1962 with a Bachelor of Arts degree, Paul R. Wohlford enrolled in the University of Tennessee College of Law and earned his Doctorate of Jurisprudence in 1964; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wohlford entered the practice of law in Bristol, Tennessee in 1965, and as a lawyer, he was able to realize that earnest sense of justice and fairness for which he will be so fondly remembered; and

WHEREAS, in 1979 and 1980, the Honorable Paul R. Wohlford served the judiciary as a special judge for the City of Bristol Tennessee before commencing his thirty years of service as the judge for the Bristol Tennessee Juvenile Court; and

WHEREAS, deciding the most heart-wrenching cases fathomable, Judge Wohlford established a reputation among all those who appeared in his courtroom and throughout Bristol as a firm but fair arbiter and a champion for the best interests of the child; Judge Wohlford served in this capacity with acumen and alacrity until the time of his death, having earned the

respect of the members of the bench and bar alike for his integrity, his genuine decency, and the exemplary quality of his decisions; and

WHEREAS, an active member of his profession, Judge Wohlford lent his extraordinary skills and leadership abilities to numerous legal organizations and committees, including serving as president of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, chairman of the Sullivan County Committee on Health, Education, and Housing, a Rule 31 mediator, and as a member of the Bristol Tennessee Bar Association, the Tennessee Bar Association, the Executive Committee of the Tennessee Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, the Tennessee Commission on Children and Youth, the Court Futures Committee, the Judicial Education Committee, the Victims Act Resource Guidelines Committee, the Tennessee Bar Association Committee on Impaired Lawyers, the Tennessee Governor's Select Steering Committee on Education, the Board of Governors of the Tennessee Trial Lawyers Association, and the Board of Trustees of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges; and

WHEREAS, endeavoring to impart his vast knowledge and brilliant insight to the next generation of legal minds, Judge Wohlford served on the faculties of the Tennessee Judicial Academy, the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, the National Coalition of State Juvenile Justice Advisory Group, and the Paralegal Program at Virginia Intermont College; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wohlford was a dedicated civic leader who distinguished himself as a public-spirited citizen of the highest order through his involvement with numerous organizations and boards; he served as president of the Bristol Family YMCA and the Bristol Chapter of the University of Tennessee Alumni Association, trustee of the Bristol Family YMCA Endowment Fund, and a member of the Bristol Regional Medical Center Ethics Committee, the Bristol Downtown Optimist Club, the Drake University Iron Dukes Alumni, and the Board of Directors of Citizens Bank of Elizabethton; and

WHEREAS, no stranger of awards and accolades, Judge Wohlford had been honored with the National Catholic Education Association's Distinguished Graduate Award and the Elizabeth McCain Award as Outstanding Juvenile Judge in Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wohlford was an active and devout member of the First Baptist Church, where he served his Lord for many years; and

WHEREAS, Paul R. Wohlford was also deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wohlford was preceded in death by his parents, Paul and Theresa McLennan Wohlford; and

WHEREAS, Paul Wohlford enjoyed the loving companionship of his devoted wife, Donna R. Wohlford; and

WHEREAS, he was the proud and loving father and father-in-law of Paul R., III and Ann Wohlford and Jonathan E. Roberts; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wohlford will also be sorely missed by his grandchildren, Paul R. Wohlford, IV, Alexandra Elizabeth Wohlford, and Bethany Ann Wohlford; and

WHEREAS, his legacy will be remembered by his sister-in-law and her husband, Sylvia W. and Michael D. Stone; his cousins and their spouses, Sherry Weaver, Judge John S. and Wanda McLellan, and Toni and Herschel Cave; along with a host of family, friends, and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wohlford leaves behind an indelible legacy of integrity and probity in public life, compassion and loyalty in private life, and diligence and dedication in all chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional jurist, public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor the memory of Judge Paul R. Wohlford, reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Judge Wohlford.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.